

EL SAMURAI! and KOJI KANEMOTO! beat the holy fudge out of each other. MICHINOKU PRO! don't look dead yet . and other stuff I saw and heard this week

Howdy!

WELCOME TO DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #44. It was yet still another gargantuan week for wrestling tape viewing- what with tapes from GLENN! who wrote the book on superdeliciousness, Rob FUCKIN Newland who wrote the book on tripendicularity, and the hand delivered tape from Hangman Tim (of WRESTLING POWER 97- on ch.38) who wrote the book on menacing my poor defenseless dogs.:) [And I wanna dedicate this to my main homies Rev. Ray and Walt for supplying the MST-for-Wrestling-Connection. Fingerlickin good y'all. HAKEEBA!]

*****JPW TV 4/12/97 (taped 4/8 Tokyo) {TIM!}

JWP, which- for some reason-is harder to find than a WCW Main Eventer who can wrestle, is not afraid to serve up the coolest TV shows in wrestledom. This one had oodles of fabulousness oozing from every pore. Mayumi Ozaki/Reiko Amano vs Megumi Kudo/Rie was a fun 'n' blood-filled Street Fight of the highest order. I dunno, I try not to think about the Russ Meyeresque implications of two WILDLY beautiful women being ABSOLUTE KINGS of the death match. Being a death match (well, sorta... you could win with a three count) fashion was important: OZ had her Red-neck Ass-Stomper Dreamgirl outfit on (mmmmmmmm...Camaro...), Rie had the FMW youngster deathmatch denim shorts and white T-shirt, Amano sported the Kansai camouflage pants and cut-off t-shirt. This rocked out hard as Amano and Rie were good at taking a beating and staying out of the way when needed and getting a little offense in here and there. OZ was as Hot, Minky, and Bitchy as the international law allows- and Kudo was right up there with her (though she was dressed for her accountants dinner party one would think, which could have been a fatal flaw for a lesser wrestler) as they used about everything at their disposal (including a dog-collar in a bizarre ode to Greg the Hammer Valentine touch) to beat the crap out of each other. HEY! KUDO! To hell with that retirement crap! Join JWP and wrestle for real for a few more years. Dynamite Kansai vs Hikari Fukuoka for JWP Title was amazing in its breadth of scope in terms of stiffness and violence. Fukuoka is the BOMB in this as she takes a right-good pounding at the hands of Dynamite but comes back with such an over the top offense that the only ending could be the one that happened. Fukuoka hit two ECONOMY-SIZED Moonsault Double-foot stomps that HAD to just suck. Kansai was her usually stiff-working self; kicking Hikari's lungs out and stretching her at impossible angles and hitting Goddess-level powerbombs and it makes me sad that she may not get to wrestle through her prime because of her kidney because she is becoming a real premier wrestler. GET ALLLLLLL THIS.

*****Grupo Revolution Champ Forum 6/7/97,6/14/97 {GLENN!}

This is (I guess) Ultimo Dragon's group in Mexico, since his name is on the ring in really big letters and he's in the main event and all and I'm assuming that the youngsters wrestling in the first Champ Forum are his students since they wrestle like little green versions of him and they

show footage of them training with him and stuff. It starts with them getting off the plane from Japan to their new quarters in Mexico and then they show their matches, which aren't bad at all really- pseudo-shootstyle with enough Lucha to keep the locals awake. A couple of these guys could really develop into something I would think. The second CF is (I'm assuming) the rest of the card which is filled out by EMLL regulars featuring La Pantera and El Brazo de Oro in a truly adequate Lucha six-man and is highlighted with a main event of UD vs Negro Casas which was pretty okay for a nine minute match. Nothing too spectacular, but kinda neat.

****GAEA Champ Forum 6/21/97

I haven't said it in a few weeks- GAEA RULES! There. I feel better. KAORU vs Chigusa was pretty good, not coming close to the KAORU/Hokuto Magnum Opus from last time, but pretty good. They both work for leg submissions throughout with KAORU hitting her highspots throughout. KAORU is so good and Chigusa pretty much works to KAORU's strengths in this match, letting her get all the cool stuff with Chigusa settling for counterholds. The end is very Yamazaki-like. Akira Hokuto/ Maiko Matsumoto/ Toshie Uematsu vs Yamada/ Meiko Satomura/Sonoko Kato match was really good, with Meiko Satomura stealing the show with her hardhitting moves and spunky demeanor. Meiko and Toshie did a lot of really nice moves, especially the even more high-flying than usual Toshie, as Matsumoto and Kato and the vastly improving Matsumoto were kinda subdued. The Akira vs Yamada portions were pretty neat as they look to be planting the seeds of a Yamada/Akira series which I'm figuring would be pretty dang good. I'm hoping that Yamada-Kato-Satomura and Uematsu-Akira-Matsumoto become stables and feud against each other in house when the OZ Academy isn't wreaking havoc. Satomura hits two death-dealing Death Valley Drivers and Toshie (who had been selling the famous bad knee like a champ) is carried out as Yamada and her gals talk shit to ultrabitch Akira Hokuto. YOU WANT ALLLLLLL THIS.

DVDVR WAREHOUSE OF REVIEWS!! WHOMP ASS!

NEW JAPAN TV 6/21/97

-Nakanishi / Kojima vs NWO Sting / Chono: This was actually pretty very okay since all these (even Chono at times) guys tried to work in this baby. NWO Sting is fine as a wrestler. HELL! He's the third best worker in NWO right now, behind Sixx and Bagwell. Kojima continues his hotstreak and Nakanishi is feeling it also with his eighties arsenal of powermoves that becomes less irritating every time I see him. NWO Sting is the most improved wrestler of the WCW Heavyweights this year.

-Choshu/Nishamura or something vs Kimura/Ishikawa: Choshu needs to retire as much as Flair needs to retire.

-Hashimoto vs Mutoh: This was for the IWGP title so Mutoh was a little fired up, but not enough to set this apart. Hash takes it easy on him. They tell the simple story of Hash working on Mutoh with big kicks to set up the brainbuster. Mutoh works on Hash's knee to set up the figure four.

Gets kinda cool at the end as Mutoh hits the Dragon Screw and Hash sells it like a... er... the champ. Pretty good but not earthshattering.

Its kinda spotty and very not essential.

6/22 AJTV

-Hayabusa / Akiyama vs Shiga / Ohmori: HEY! HEY! This was a fat ass batch of fun. Akiyama is the cranky old bastard in this one due to the fact he has to tag with reknowned big pansy-Hayabusa. Shiga and Ohmori hate him slightly more. Shiga is really coming on as of late with his wacky highflying stunts and miniscule pants. Akiyama stomps his scrawny ass into the ground. Jun tags Hayabusa with the look of contempt that says, "You, my Lamprey-masked friend, are WAY too much of a fancy pants to be in MY ring." ME WANT AKIYAMA vs HAYABUSA! WOO-HOO!

-Akiyama vs Misawa: This was pretty freakin CHOICE as you can imagine. The usual Misawa match with him throwing the punk on his head, selling a few Exploder suplexes, and hitting a FABULOUS tope. Yeah, you want ALLLLL this.

MICHINOKU PRO Champ Forum 6/28/97

-Tiger Mask IV/Great Sasuke vs Shinzaki/Gran Hamada: This was pretty good, what with Sasuke being the only person who could coax super sadsack Shinzaki to get his lousy sorry ass into gear. Hamada is divine and the Great Sasuke is the freakin KING. I didn't want to punch my TV when TM4 was on my screen which is good.:)

-Dick Togo vs Super Delfin: This was that weird ass match that sets up Delfin's big turn. Not much of a match. Basically Delfin getting the crap beat oput of him and the audience getting ugly. Who the hell knows what brought on this Super-Memphis style angle- the locals weren't digging it, it seems. Delfin crawls between Dick TOGO's legs and they call it a night.

-Nakajima/Funaki/Men's Teioh vs Yakushiji/Naniwa/Hoshikawa: THIS WAS BOSS!! Who says everybody left MP? Naniwa is the ringleader in this battle of the youngsters. I've really dug Hoshikawa lately. He's such a big shoot-style guy who can do the Lucha better than his KDX counterpart, Funaki, can. Hanzo Nakajima hit two good moves- a weird piledriver variation and that powerbomb into a bridge. By the end it comes down to Naniwa and Teioh to supply the match and they tear it up. Naniwa hits his most fabulous swinging DDT and a Super Spinning Doctor Bomb. Teioh was Tieoh. Yakushiji was the unfortunate victim in this one.

NEW JAPAN TV 6/28/97

-Tiger King vs Kobayashi: These guys are spry for a couple of old guys. I still didn't watch real closely.

-Ohtani/Hanzo/Takaiwa/Tajiri vs Liger/Naniwa/Wagner/Jericho: This was good. Wagner and Liger were an unlikely allied duo but Wagner was actually kinda interesting in his little trip to Japan. I love this line-up except for that Hanzo fella (though he once again didn't do anything stupid). Jericho and Naniwa held up the youngster end for their side as Otani and Tajiri were

suitable beautiful for their side. I'm really digging the Otani extended bootrake in the corner. Takaiwa was the unfortunate victim in this one.

-El Samurai vs Kanemoto: HOLY FLYING FUDGE! This was GREAT. THIS WAS GREAT. Koji and El Samurai decide to find out once and for all who the biggest prick in New Japan is. Koji was AWESOME hitting his bonecrushing spots and showing absolute contempt for El Samurai. El Samurai was FIRED UP and delivered his second great match in a row that I've seen him in. The new twist to being a dick for Koji was the little knees to the head. The sheer bastardness of Kanemoto actually costs him the match; Kanemoto sets El Samurai on the toprope facing out of the ring and then goes up and hits a REVERSE FRANKERSTEINER. Since the human body don't bend that way, El hits headfirst on the mat. Considering that Sammy is practically dead and the Super J is all but in Kanemoto's supremely surly hands, Koji of course decides to slap him around a while and hit a few moonsaults to drive home his point. From there, it becomes super beautiful. This was better than Liger/Kanemoto which I thought was better than Ohtani/Liger. El Samurai is the fucking KING in this match and Kanemoto is the fucking KING in this match.

ALL JAPAN TV 6/29/97

-Ikeda/Ono vs Ogawa/Kikuchi: Oh HOLY GARSH! Whoda thunk that ALL JAPAN would suddenly have really great undercards. Ikeda and Ono are both from BattlARTS- the little cultish shootgroup that COULD!- and they whip ass in this match. Ono is such a tough little bastard- weighing 150 tops- that he actually looks credible against eternal underacheiver Ogawa. Ikeda is supremely suited for All Japan since he is the one who pushed BattlARTS deeply into pro-style psychology but kept the stiffness- so in actuality; BattlARTS becomes the perfect springboard to the All Japan ring. The style adjustment is very slight and this is proven by Ono's seamless transition. Ikeda vs Kikuchi is gonna kick ass a whole bunch and Shiga vs Ono would be great also. With this and the hatred of Hayabusa, the undercard is becoming worth watching again.

-Misawa/Akiyama vs Taue/Honda: Okay, who said Baba's lost his touch? Two (countem two) tag matches with Taue in it has basically rebuilt him to make the next Triple Crown match look interesting. The history between Taue and Akiyama take precedence over the obvious matchup of this match. Taue is basically wrestling as the bitter forgotten man and I'm digging it. The pinnacle is Taue hitting a Nodawa on Akiyama and having Honda cover him for the pin. This was stiff, the psychology was deep and Taue was ten-times cooler than those other pansies in the big four.

NEXT WEEK: All That Pancrase I said I would talk about this week (HEY! What can I possibly say about Kondo/Gasserman?)- ALL that Rings I got From Loreface in the never ending struggle to get me to like Tamura.:)

NANIWA~!